

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF WISCONSIN

QATAR INVESTMENT & PROJECTS
DEVELOPMENT HOLDING COMPANY W.L.L.
and HIS HIGHNESS SHEIKH HAMAD BIN
ABDULLAH BIN KHALIFA AL-THANI,

Plaintiffs,

v.

JOHN DOE,

Defendant.

OPINION & ORDER

17-cv-553-jdp

Plaintiffs Qatar Investment & Projects Development Holding Company W.L.L. (QIPCO) and its chief executive officer, His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Abdullah bin Khalifa al-Thani, filed this defamation lawsuit against the unknown owners and operators of “The Muslim Issue” blog concerning a two-year-old blog post falsely accusing al-Thani of sexually abusing underage girls in the Czech Republic. The post discussed criminal charges against Hamad bin Abdallah bin *Thani* al-Thani, but posted a picture of Hamad bin Abdallah bin *Khalifa* al-Thani. The court granted plaintiffs’ motion for a temporary restraining order and later extended the TRO. Dkt. 17 and Dkt. 23. On October 18, 2017, the court held a hearing regarding whether to extend or modify the TRO and whether to allow service of defendant by email. For the reasons stated during the hearing and summarized here, the court will issue a preliminary injunction and allow plaintiffs to serve defendant by email.

A. Extending the TRO

Attached is a proposed preliminary injunction. Plaintiff and the third parties may object to the response period in the procedure in the proposed injunction and suggest revisions to the

proposed order by Monday, October 23, at 5 p.m. If the court has not received any objections by that time, it will enter the preliminary injunction as proposed.

B. Service of defendant

The court will authorize plaintiffs to serve defendant by email. There is no doubt that defendant has actual notice of the lawsuit, as shortly before the hearing, defendant sought a six-month continuance. (Construing defendant's email to plaintiffs as a motion, it is denied.) And because of defendant's efforts to avoid service, there is no other feasible way to complete service. Plaintiffs must email the summons and complaint to defendant once again and submit an affidavit of service. The case will then proceed against defendant. If and when plaintiff learns defendant's name (or names, should The Muslim Issue prove to be authored by multiple individuals), they must complete service against the identified parties.

ORDER

IT IS ORDERED that:

1. Plaintiffs Qatar Investment & Projects Development Holding Company W.L.L. (QIPCO) and His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Abdullah bin Khalifa al-Thani's motion for additional time to effectuate service, Dkt. 30, is GRANTED. Plaintiffs must serve defendant by October 23, 2017.
2. Plaintiffs' motion for leave to serve defendant by email, Dkt. 19, is GRANTED. Plaintiffs must email the summons and complaint to defendant and then submit an affidavit of service.
3. Plaintiffs' motion for leave to file defendant's email as an answer is DENIED. Upon service, defendant will have 21 days to answer the complaint.

4. Automattic, Inc.'s motion to modify the temporary restraining order, Dkt. 32, is DENIED in part.
5. Automattic, Twitter, and Tumblr may object to the response period in the procedure outlined in the proposed injunction and suggest revisions to the proposed order by 5 p.m., Monday, October 23, 2017. If the court has not received any objections by that time, it will enter the preliminary injunction as proposed.

Entered October 19, 2017.

BY THE COURT:

/s/

JAMES D. PETERSON
District Judge